

The claims defining the invention are as follows:

1. An identifier comprising at least two machine readable components wherein at least one of the said components is capable of being changed from an original value to a modified value in response to a stimulus.
2. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein at least some of the machine readable components comprise of elements having binary values.
3. An identifier according to any one of claims 1 or 2 wherein the identifier includes one or more graphic symbols and/or characters.
4. An identifier according to claim 3 wherein one or more graphic symbols and/or characters are alpha-numeric characters.
5. An identifier according to any one of claims 1 or 2 wherein the identifier includes a bar code or pictographic code.
6. An identifier according to claim 5 wherein the bar code is a 1-dimensional bar code or pictographic code.
7. An identifier according to claim 5 wherein the bar code is a 2-dimensional bar code or pictographic code.
8. An identifier according to claim 5 wherein the bar code is a 3-dimensional bar code or pictographic code.
9. An identifier according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the identifier includes at least one component capable of being read by a human which changes from an original form capable of being read by a human to a modified form capable of being read by a human in response to the stimulus.
10. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in temperature.
11. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in pressure.
12. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in electric current.
13. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in electromagnetic field.

14. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in light. (level, accumulative, wavelength).
15. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in chemical composition.
- 5 16. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is exposure to certain gases or vapours.
17. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is exposure to certain liquids, emulsions or slurries.
18. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is exposure to certain solids.
- 10 19. An identifier according to claim 1 wherein the stimulus is a change in time or an indirect consequence of a change in time.
20. An identifier according to any one of claims 5 to 8 wherein at least some of the components may be used to represent digits.
21. An identifier according to claim 20 wherein at least one of the digits is a check digit.
- 15 22. An identifier according to claim 21 wherein the check digit does not change in response to the stimulus and its value is incorrect after the identifier has responded to the stimulus.
23. An identifier according to claim 21 wherein the check digit does not change in response to the stimulus and its value is correct after the identifier has responded to
20 the stimulus.
24. An identifier according to claim 21 wherein the check digit changes in response to the stimulus such that its value is incorrect after the identifier has been exposed to the stimulus.
- 25 25. An identifier according to claim 21 wherein the check digit changes in response to the stimulus such that its value is correct after the identifier has responded to the stimulus.
26. An identifier according to any one of the preceding claims wherein the identifier includes a power source and an electrical circuit.

27. An identifier according to claim 26 wherein the power source includes at least one of a primary electric cell, a secondary electric cell, a photovoltaic device, a piezo-electric device or a capacitor.
28. An identifier according to any one of claims 1 to 25 wherein the identifier includes a power antenna and an electrical circuit.
29. An identifier according to claim 26 wherein at least part of the power source is formed by printing.
30. An identifier according to claim 28 wherein at least part of the power antenna is formed by printing.
31. A package having an identifier according to any one of claims 26 to 30 wherein the electrical circuit is placed such that it will tend to be disturbed if the package is opened or tampered with.
32. An identifier formed by applying a light coloured material over a dark coloured surface such that gaps in the light coloured material form a machine readable code.
33. An identifier according to claim 32 which is capable to being changed from an original value to a modified value by a means in accordance with any one of claims 1 to 30.
34. An identifier comprising at least two machine readable components wherein at least one of the said components is capable of being changed from one colour to another colour in response to a stimulus.
35. An identifier comprising a bar code or pictographic code having at least two machine readable components wherein at least one of the said components is capable of being changed from an original value to a modified value in response to a stimulus wherein both the original value and the modified value are machine readable.
36. An item having an identifier according to any one of claims 1 to 35.
37. A label or tag including an identifier according to any one of claims 1 to 35.
38. A container having an identifier according to any one of claims 1 to 35.